



# MTUBA CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

## ASSESSMENT POLICY

January 2013

### A: PREAMBLE

This policy provides guidance to learners, parents and educators on the procedure for school based assessment (SBA) tasks, tests and examinations.

Assessment is a vital part of Mtuba Christian Academy's teaching and learning programme as it provides valuable information about the learners' learning and progress. This information is also used to monitor and improve teaching and learning strategies and to measure the outcomes of learning at all stages.

The nature of Outcomes Based Assessment means that the final mark allocated to each learner must be an accurate representation of the level of achievement in the sum of the outcomes of the subject. While particular weightings are allocated to individual assessment tasks, the final assessment marks reflect the learners' overall level of achievement at the end of the year.

This assessment policy is informed by the Biblical Worldview and the legal frameworks as enshrined in SASA, Language in Education Policy, National Protocol on Assessment and the CAPS documents. As such, this policy is guided by principles of fairness, authenticity, validity, openness and consistency.

### B. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

1. To promote academic excellence.
2. To ensure that assessments are conducted in a fair manner for the learners to achieve the best results.
3. To ensure that all classes follow the same procedure with regards to tests, examinations and SBA to ensure that the system is fair and transparent.
4. To provide regular and insightful feedback to parents on the academic progress of their child
5. To identify barriers to learning timeously, which will then inform the intervention strategies required to assist the learner.

### C. SCOPE OF ASSESSMENT

Assessment is the process of collecting, analysing and interpreting information to assist teachers in making decisions about the progress of their students.

Assessment should provide evidence of student performance relative to learning outcomes enshrined in the CAPS document for each subject.

Classroom assessment shall be both formal and informal.

Informal continuous assessment should form part of the daily classroom routine of teachers as a means to monitor student progress and to provide feedback to students.

Formal assessment tasks must be designed to provide systematic evaluation of student performance and progress, and evidence which can be used to evaluate student performance relative to the outcomes/abilities for each specific learning programme, learning area or subject.

Formal examinations (Grades 4 to 12) will take place in the second and fourth terms each year. The second term examinations shall be included as one of formal CASS tasks for a subject or learning area. Grade 12 students will write an additional examination in the third term.

On completion of examinations, students will be given an opportunity to review their scripts. After the mid-year examination these scripts will be used for remediation purposes and to improve the examination technique of students.

#### **D. PORTFOLIO OF EVIDENCE**

Each grade/subject educator is required to keep a portfolio of all material related to the assessment of the subject for the year for each grade. The portfolio must include the following:

- the assessment plan for the year / term for each grade
- the formal CASS assessment tasks for each grade, including the assessment tools used to assess the task (once completed)
- the work schedules and lesson plans (once completed) for each grade
- the subject averages, symbol or code distributions for each grade or subject
- the mark list for each grade listing, for each student, all marks included as part of the formal assessment as well as the average mark for each assessment task.
- a student portfolio guidelines document for each grade which lists for students the documents and evidence that must be included in their portfolio for the subject.

#### **E. INTERVENTION**

- Comments / feedback are to be given by educators to individual learners either written (e.g. on the learner's work or in the learner's book) or verbally.
- Problems are to be communicated to parents on a regular basis by inter alia
  - Parent/Teacher conferences
  - Special meetings with parents of a specific grade
  - Letter of concern requesting specified parents to meet with their child's teacher/s.
- Parents are encouraged to communicate with educators to express concerns regarding their child's progress whenever the need arises.

#### **F. GENERAL ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES**

- The Outcomes Based Assessment methodology shall be followed.
- A minimum of TWO learners' abilities (a combination of skills, **knowledge**, attitudes and values) shall be assessed over time through a series of assessment activities.
- Assessment shall include various assessment types, methods and forms.
- Various cognitive levels (Taxonomy) shall be covered in each assessment task using the 60% low-order and 40% high-order structure. Levels must be indicated on the item analysis.
- Planning shall focus on what learners already know (Recognition of Prior Learning) and shall specify how results will be used.
- The assessment plan should indicate (per task) subject, grade, topic, outcomes, date and assessor.
- Learners shall be given a detailed set of criteria against which their performance will be measured.
- Results shall be recorded on a mark record sheet or book and shall be analysed (to indicate average, number of passes, etc.) A graphical representation of results may be used.

## **G. TEST PROCEDURES**

1. Tests shall be undertaken on a regular basis. The test is written on the day designated on the **test calendar** (to be made available to learners and parent at the start of each term).
2. The learners shall be given at least two (2) days' notice before a class test. The content for the test shall be clearly set out for the learner. (The learner must write the content to be tested and the date of the test in their homework diary).
3. The test must be typed by the educator on an official letterhead and be given in for printing.
4. The control test must be kept in the safe once moderated (as per procedures in the Moderation Policy) and printed. There must be enough copies for the whole class and 1 extra.
5. Any learner who requires an enlarged copy, or any other aid due to a barrier to learning, must be identified before the test day and be catered for appropriately.
6. The test must be marked within ONE week of it being written and be sent for moderation.
7. The mark must be recorded in the educators' record books and be immediately sent for electronic capturing not later than TWO weeks from the date of the test.
8. The test may be sent home to be signed by the parent. This is to ensure that parents remain informed and assist with the learning process of their child.
9. The educator must go through the test with the learners and provide the correct answers. This is to ensure that the learner can correct any misconceptions he/she has and improve on their results in the next assessment.
10. No more than TWO tests may be scheduled on a day.

## **H. SUBMISSION OF WORK BY LEARNERS**

1. Learners should adhere strictly to deadlines.
2. Deadlines may be negotiated between educator and learners, but they must be the SAME for all classes in that subject or grade.
3. Deadlines or interim deadlines are to be clearly indicated as an integral part of the instructions for the task, and progress should be monitored accordingly.
4. Procedure for work not handed in on time:
  - a. 10% of the total mark is to be deducted for each day that the assignment, project or task is late.
  - b. After one week (5 school days), an assignment, project or task will no longer be awarded marks for that assessment period. The task receives a zero (0) mark for that assessment period.
  - c. The task, referred to in b. above, must be marked. The mark, less 50%, will then be used for the final mark calculation at the end of the year.
5. The concept "met the requirements of the subject" is to be strictly adhered to. This implies that all work must be completed and handed in by a learner even though the due date (see 4 above) has passed.
6. Individual oral presentations: learners absent on presentation day are to be given the opportunity to present on another day and time to be negotiated by the learner and the educator involved.

Learners who refuse to an oral must be given an opportunity to do it without the class present. If they still refuse to do the oral, they will receive zero for the oral.

7. Educators are not obliged to provide extra tuition to learners who have been absent. It is the learner's responsibility to make up work they have missed and it is the learner who must approach the educator for extra help.
8. A learner who misses an assessment with a valid reason:
  - a. The permission letter or doctor's certificate must be kept with the learner's record of assessment.
  - b. The learner will be given a chance to complete the task on a Friday afternoon (from 2pm to 3pm) and will be supervised by the teacher on detention roster, unless otherwise arranged with the subject teacher concerned.

"Valid reason" in this context includes the following:

- a. illness supported by a valid medical certificate;
  - b. humanitarian reasons, which includes the death of an immediate family member, supported by a death certificate;
  - c. the learner appearing in a court hearing, which must be supported by written evidence; or
  - d. any other reason as may be accepted as valid by the Head of the Assessment body or his or her representative.
9. A learner who misses an SBA task **WITHOUT** a valid reason:
    - a. The learner is given zero (0) for the task and the intervention form must be completed and added in place of the task in the learner's record of work.
    - b. The parent shall be informed through a note in homework book or telephonically.
  10. To discourage "passive participants in group work", peer assessment in group work will count heavily to determine the amount of input of individual group members, i.e. a learner should not be awarded the average mark for the group when she has played little or no part in the research or preparation of the assignment.
  11. Group presentations: learners absent for presentations must have a valid reason and the assessment will be rescheduled where possible.

## **I. ORIGINALITY OF LEARNER'S WORK**

1. Copying of work from others and/or intrusive parental or other assistance does not contribute to a learner's development of skills and competence.
2. Plagiarism in any form is a serious offence and will not be tolerated. Zero marks will be awarded for work copied from resources or from other learners, or for information downloaded or copied from the internet.
3. All sources used in assignments have to be acknowledged in a properly constructed bibliography or reference list.
4. All final work for presentation shall be done at school under controlled conditions.

## **J. RECORDING OF MARKS / SCORES**

- The weighting of marks shall be as indicated in the CAPS documents.
- The following adjustment is made in the weighting of Intermediate Phase marks in order to bridge a very wide gap between the weighting of SBA and Exam marks in grades 6 and 7:

| Grade | SBA | Exam |
|-------|-----|------|
| 4     | 75% | 25%  |
| 5     | 60% | 40%  |
| 6     | 50% | 50%  |

- ANA and IEB Core-skills test results shall be recorded separately. Scores from these tests shall not form part of the SBA marks.

### **K. SUBJECT CHANGES**

Subject changes are generally discouraged. It is hoped that girls together with the advice and guidance from their teachers, the school psychologist and parents will make the correct subject choices at the end of their Grade 9 year. Subject changes are only permitted in special cases in Grade 10.

A learner wishing to make a subject change in Grade 10 needs to obtain a letter from the parent and communicate this with the Phase Manager and the Principal. Once a discussion has been had, the subject teachers concerned will be approached. Learners will be responsible for catching up the relevant work and concepts missed as well as purchasing the correct textbooks as a matter of urgency. No special exceptions will be made for candidates having changed subjects just prior to a test or examination. Marks obtained in the previous subject will be transferred to the new subject and re-weighted accordingly.

### **L. ASSESSMENT OF LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

On the advice of a competent professional such as a doctor, educational psychologist or psychometrist, a learner with temporary or permanent barriers to learning may be granted various concessions. Concessions may include:

- additional time to complete tests and examinations
- spelling dispensations
- handwriting dispensations.

### **M. IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed by the academic committee at the start of each year to ensure that it complies with the changing legislation.

It will be work-shopped with the educators at the start of each academic year.

Each class educator will explain the procedures to their class at the start of each year.

Date of Review: January 2015

Date of Acceptance: January 2014

Date of Policy implementation: January 2014

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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Headmaster

Chairman: SGB